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Longridge Urban District Council.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1942.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council of Longridge Urban District.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the health of Longridge for the year 1942. At the request of the Minister of Health it is abbreviated as in previous war years.

The area of the Urban District is unchanged.

The social conditions of the district have remained satisfactory and employment has been good.

The health of the people in the district generally has been well sustained and none of the various Infectious Diseases gave rise to outbreaks of epidemic proportions. Measles was prevalent for a short time, but it and the other infectious diseases were of a mild type. It must, in fact, be recorded that after three years of war strain, the health of the population is certainly not inferior to that of days of peace, but it might even be said that on the whole it is better than in less strenuous times. With the increased employment of the married female side of the population on work of national importance, and in consequence their more frequent absence from home and for longer periods, it might have been expected that the younger end of the population would show evidence of deterioration in health and general nutrition; such however has not been the case. Those diseases of childhood, Pneumonia and Enteritis, so characteristic of lowered resistance, have not been prevalent, and Influenza, so fatal and with such rapidity of spread among the debilitated, has been mild in type and the cases have been few in number.

There has been a slight but definite increase of Tuberculosis in the area particularly amongst the younger ages, amongst those indeed where the question of milk must always be considered an essential factor in the disease. Therefore in 1942 a more definite attempt was made to try to improve the quality of the milk produced and retailed in the district, and for this purpose samples of milk have been taken and submitted for bacteriological test at more frequent intervals. The standard of purity revealed by these tests has not been satisfactory but it is hoped that the more frequent sampling, and the information and warning thus conveyed to the producer, will produce a better and purer type of milk.

It has been one of the unfortunate results of the war that milk an essential food for the younger members of the population, should have deteriorated so much in quality and in bacteriological purity. The causes of this deterioration are complex—shortage of labour, shortage of foodstuff, the demand for more and more milk, and utilization of milk of inferior quality no longer required for the manufacture of cheese, are all factors which must be considered.

It is the obvious duty of each and every local authority to endeavour to encourage the production of a clean milk, and to discourage by every means in its power the production of milk which might be harmful to the young children of the district. It must be equally obvious that it is useless to expect favourable results unless all contiguous districts adopt the same procedure, set the same standard of purity of milk, and the same standard of hygiene in its dairies and cowsheds.

In connection with this duty of the local authority a quotation from Circular 2669 of the Ministry of Health issued in July, 1942, on the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme of the Board of Agriculture, is as follows: "I am to point out that this scheme is additional to and does not alter any requirements of the Food and Drug Act, 1938, and Orders and Regulations thereunder relating to milk. The Minister appreciates the work of the Authorities under the Act and the difficulties which are experienced by some of them under present circumstances. He desires, however, especially in view of the present importance of increasing the milk supply, to take this opportunity of requesting them to take all practicable steps to maintain their work under the relevant Orders and Regulations, especially in relation to cleanliness in methods of production, treatment and distribution."

It is unfortunate that there are no less than three Government Departments interested in the question of milk—The Board of Agriculture mainly interested in the question of stock, The Ministry of Health interested in quality, and the Ministry of Food interested in quantity.

Amongst such conflicting interests, the local authority is expected to ensure that its population does receive a good milk and a milk which is of a reasonable purity bacteriologically. This can only be done by frequent inspections of the producing farms, of the stock, and frequent tests of the milk for quality and purity.

With the steady decline in the birth rate the preservation of the health of the more youthful part of the population becomes of increasing importance; and every effort devoted to that end is not only of local but also of national importance.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health: G. G. Wray.

Special Certificates of qualifications: M.D. Ch.B., D.P.H.

Is he whole or part-time Officer of the Local Authority? Part.

Any other Public Appointments held by him? M.O.H., Fulwood, Walton-le-Dale,
Asst. County M.O.

Is he in private practice? No.

Sanitary Inspector: James Marshall.

Special Certificates of Qualification: Royal Sanitary Certificates.

Whole or part-time as Sanitary Inspector: Part.

Other appointments with Local Authority: Surveyor and Engineer.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area in acres	3,285.
Population (Census 1931)	4,158.
Estimated Population (mid 1942)	4 200.
Number of Inhabited Houses (Census 1931)	1,067.
Number at the end of 1942 (Rate Books)	1,219.
Rateable Value	£23,575.
Sum represented by a penny rate	£94.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS.

			Total	M.	F.	
Legitimate	...	...	73	35	38	Birth-rate per 1,000 estimated resident population (mid 1942) 18.09.
Illegitimate	...	...	3	2	1	
Total	...	...	76	37	39	

STILL BIRTHS.

			Total	M.	F.	
Legitimate	...	...	2	1	1	Rate per 1,000 total (Live and Still) Births 25.64.
Illegitimate	...	...	—	—	—	
Total	...	...	2	1	1	

DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE.

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	4	2	2
Illegitimate	...	...	1	1	—
Total	...	...	5	3	2

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE.

All Infants per 1,000 live births	65.78
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	54.79
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	333.3
Total M. F.	
TOTAL DEATHS, all causes	50 25 25
Death rate per 1,000 estimated population	11.9
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	6
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2)	Nil
Deaths from Puerpural causes	Nil

As a matter of interest the statistical rates for 1941, 1942, and for the five years average (from 1936—1940) and those for Lancashire and England and Wales are given:—

Per 1,000 Estimated Population					Maternal Mortality Rate.		Rate of Deaths under 1 yr. per 1000 Live Births
	Live Birth Rate	Crude Death Rate.	Death rate from Tuberculosis of Respiratory System.	Death Rate from Cancer	Per 1000 Live Birth	Per 1000 Total Live and Still Births	
Mean of 5 years 1936 — 1940.....	15.8	14.3	0.29	1.58	3.17	3.07	87
1941.....	18.0	14.7	0.47	1.66	12.50	12.19	88
1942.....	18.09	11.9	Nil	1.43	Nil	Nil	65
County of Lancaster (1941)	14.73	13.06	0.43	1.65	3.38	3.24	61
England & Wales (1942).....	15.8	11.6	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	2.01	49

N.A. — Not Available.

It is apparent from this table that the Infantile Mortality Rate and the Maternal Mortality Rate for Longridge are far too high when compared with that of England and Wales. These rates have usually been high in this district, considerably higher usually than the average for the rest of Lancashire. This is a matter which must be viewed with some misgiving, it so obviously affects the younger ages of population, those ages which it is so important to cherish and to preserve.

The causes of these greater mortality rates in Longridge are complex—housing, the milk supply, and failure to utilise to the best advantage the preventive services which are available in the district are all involved, but there are other causes, which are not immediately obvious, such as Abortion, Prematurity and Congenital Malformations which may be factors in these higher rates.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

42 cases were notified as follows:—

Measles	27
Scarlet Fever	7
Diphtheria	2
Whooping Cough	1
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	1
Acute Pneumonia	4

The Cerebro-Spinal Fever case was not removed to hospital and died at home.

The Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria cases were removed to hospital.

During the year the attempt to render the child population immune to Diphtheria was continued, with some success, as the only two cases of this disease which occurred were both adults. It has never been claimed for these preventive injections that they produce a complete immunity in every child but certainly over 90 per cent. of children so protected are immune to Diphtheria. The period of immunity enjoyed is a variable one in different children but it is generally considered that in the majority the protection lasts for four years. The period of immunity can then be extended for a similar period by one injection, and this is certainly advisable if the child is still at school.

90 children under school age and 34 of school age were immunised during the year.

At the end of the year 147 children in the group from 0—5 years and 530 in the group 5—15 years had been immunised with percentages of 51.22 and 85.71 respectively.

In addition 152 children who had reached the age of 15 were still within the period of immunity.

Number of children immunised by Practitioners	79.
Number of children immunised by myself	45.

The Laboratory of Preston Royal Infirmary has been available for pathological and bacteriological examinations and has been of valuable assistance. Six swabs for Diphtheria and three tests for Enteric Fever were examined during the year. This is a considerable reduction as compared with 1941 when 39 specimens were examined, and it is satisfactory to be able to report the small numbers of even suspected cases of serious disease.

The arrangements for the isolation and treatment of Infectious Diseases have not been altered from those of previous years.

GENERAL DISEASES.

Cases of accidents or of sickness in inhabitants of this district are treated at Preston Royal Infirmary or at Sharce Green Hospital. The transport of these patients is by arrangement with the hospitals concerned, by ambulances from Preston Corporation, or by private ambulances.

At Preston Royal Infirmary a special Radium Clinic for the treatment of Malignant Diseases is established and is staffed by consultants from the Christie Hospital, Manchester. The Laboratory of the Infirmary is available to assist with diagnosis.

SERVICES SUPPLIED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

MATERNITY.—An Ante-natal Clinic is held fortnightly at the School Clinic in Kestor Lane, where Mr. Andison, the obstetrical specialist of the Preston Royal Infirmary, attends at each session, and is available for consultation by all expectant mothers of this and surrounding districts.

During 1942 58 mothers attended this Clinic and made 216 attendances; of these, 20 were Longridge women who made 71 attendances. The other women attending came from Ribchester, Chipping, Goosnargh, Grimsargh, Knowle Green and Hurst Green.

After the birth of the child, the mothers are encouraged to attend for Post-natal consultation, 21 attended and made a total of 25 attendances. Nine of these were from Longridge and nine attendances were made.

The County Health Visitor is in regular attendance at these Clinics and occasionally the Midwives.

Where cases exhibit abnormality or where the home circumstances are unfavourable hospital accommodation is arranged through the Ante-natal Clinic at the Maternity Hospitals of the Preston Royal Infirmary or of Sharoe Green. Many maternity cases also make use of the accommodation at St. Joseph's Hospital, Mount Street, which is available mainly for private patients. Private practitioners also refer patients to all three hospitals.

There is one small registered Maternity Home in the district.

Home Nursing and a domiciliary maternity nursing service is provided by the Longridge and District Nursing Association.

CHILD WELFARE.—A centre meets at the Clinic each Tuesday afternoon where mothers with babies and children under school age may attend for consultation and advice. A Doctor and the County Health Visitor are in attendance at each session.

During the year 237 children attended and made 1,382 attendances.

THE SCHOOL CLINIC provides inspection, advice, and treatment for children of school age.

MINOR AILMENTS are treated on two mornings per week. During 1942 the number of children attending was 273 and the attendances made were 1,489.

AN OPHTHALMIC CLINIC meets fortnightly for the correction of errors of refraction and for the treatment of squint. 190 children attended in 1942 and made 251 attendances.

THE DENTAL CLINIC for inspection, for conservative treatment, and for extractions meets two days per week. In 1942, 723 children attended and 962 attendances were made.

The numbers of Evacuees billeted in the district who attended were as follows:—

Minor Ailments Clinic	49.	Attendances 540.
Ophthalmic Clinic.	17.	Attendances 17.
Dental Clinic	58.	Attendances 100.

SPECIAL DEFECTS.—Children suffering from Deformities, Paralysis, or other Orthopaedic defects are referred to the Orthopaedic Clinic which meets at Leyland monthly. Where such cases require prolonged hospital treatment for these defects they are admitted to the County Council Orthopaedic Hospital at Biddulph or to County Council beds in the Hospitals at Heswall or Windermere.

Blind Children or Partially Blind Children (i.e., children whose sight is so defective that they are unable to read the ordinary school books) are sent to Fulwood Blind School.

Deaf and Dumb Children are educated at the Royal Cross School, Preston.

Mental Defectives and persons suffering from Mental Diseases are dealt with by the Lancashire Asylums Board.

TUBERCULOSIS.—The County Council Tuberculosis Staff is responsible for the treatment of patients suffering from various forms of this disease. A consultant service, sanatorium and hospital treatment, and X-ray examination are all available under this scheme. The examination of sputum is carried out at the Dispensaries, the nearest one being at Walton's Parade, Fishergate Hill, Preston.

Six cases, 2 Pulmonary and 4 Non-pulmonary, were notified during the year. Two of the Non-respiratory cases were in children under two years of age and one of these children died. One of the two Respiratory cases also died.

One case notified at the end of 1941 died, and the Post-Mortem findings showed that this was not a case of Tuberculosis.

One case of Respiratory Tubercle, originally notified in 1936, has now recovered and has been removed from the Register.

The number of persons remaining on the Register at the end of 1942 was 20 (18 in 1941).

The Table below shows the notifications and deaths arranged in age groups:—

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY IN 1942.

Age Period	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—5	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	1
5—10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20—25	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
25—35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
45—55	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
55—65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 upw'd	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

THE CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

At the end of 1941 and in the beginning of the year 1942, Scarlet Fever cases occurred in one of the schools in the district. Some of the cases notified resided in other areas. An investigation into this outbreak showed that it was probably one of the carrier borne type. Three children who were suspected to be the carriers concerned were excluded from school. The outbreak subsided immediately.

Some cases of Anterior Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis) appeared in surrounding areas. All the practitioners in the district were warned by letter of the presence of this disease, and of the possibility of the spread of the disease by means of abortive cases.

The County Council undertook to bear the cost of hospital treatment for severe cases of Scabies (Itch).

At a meeting held at Preston, a comprehensive scheme was framed to deal with any cases of Typhus Fever which might occur. Such cases are to be admitted to Preston Borough Infectious Diseases Hospital and dealt with by a specially trained squad supplied by Preston Corporation. A panel of consultants would be available to assist with diagnosis.

One case of Anthrax in a cow was notified but the notification was subsequently withdrawn.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

The WATER SUPPLY obtained from Preston Corporation, has continued to be sufficient in amount, and bacteriological tests taken frequently by the Corporation Water Department have shown its purity. The amount of water consumed daily per head of population was approximately 36 gallons.

There were no extensions of the water mains during the year.

REFUSE DISPOSAL and SCAVENGING were carried out by the motor vehicle belonging to the Urban District.

SEWERAGE.—The majority of the houses in the Urban District are on the water carriage system although in many cases the old fashioned waste water closets are still used. The sewerage is conveyed by gravity to the sewage works situated in the west side of the district. The plant is composed of settling tanks, humus tanks, filters and land drainage. One portion of the sewerage which is dealt with by the land filtration is insufficiently treated and the resultant effluent is unsatisfactory. The conversion of all the existing houses to the water carriage system and the provision of further houses will still further reduce the efficiency of the plant. More filters and humus tanks are required.

As already indicated many earth closets and privies still exist particularly in the more rural parts of the area. These are emptied at regular intervals.

There were no conversions to the water carriage system in 1942.

SCHOOLS.

All the schools in the district have been kept under regular supervision. Their sanitary arrangements have been satisfactory. There was no epidemic of Infectious Disease which required school closure in 1942.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.—The number of dairy farms in the district was 32 with approximately 540 cows. In addition there are 3 dairymen (other than cowkeepers). The number of inspections made during the year was 132 but these will be dealt with in Mr. Marshall's report which is appended.

During the year 20 samples of milk were obtained and submitted to tests for bacterial purity and for Tuberculosis—one sample contained the Tubercle Bacillus. One of these samples of milk taken at the schools for the County Council also contained the Bacillus of Tubercle. Both these samples were duly reported to the Ministry of Agriculture and in each case one cow was found to be suffering from Tuberculosis. The cows affected were dealt with under the Tuberculosis Order. Of the 20 samples submitted to bacteriological test for purity, 9 were satisfactory and 11 unsatisfactory.

A licence was granted to one producer in the district "To produce and bottle" Tuberculin Tested Milk.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.—Owing to the system of rationing in force this work was more limited than in peace-time but any inspections found necessary are detailed in Mr. Marshall's report which also includes a record of the carcasses inspected by him at the slaughter house.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1942.

No new houses were built during the year. The housing conditions showed no marked deterioration generally although in individual cases repairs, even of some urgency, had to be deferred on account of the shortage of labour and material.

A report was presented to the Council of an inspection made by the Sanitary Inspector and myself of a number of houses where the sanitary conveniences were defective or deficient, and where a certain degree of overcrowding was present.

Further details of house inspection, defects, and nuisances are set out in Mr. Marshall's report.

NEW LEGISLATION IN 1942.

- (1)—Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1941, came into force.
- (2)—Insulin Order, authorised the supply of Insulin to needy persons.

REPORTS APPENDED.

Report of the Sanitary Inspector.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

G. G. WRAY.

Longridge,
October, 1943.

REPORT OF SURVEYOR AND SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1942.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The Factories and Workshops on inspection have been found to be kept in a clean condition.

RETAIL BAKEHOUSES.

The retail Bakehouses on regular visits have been found to be kept in wholesome condition and walls lime-washed.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

On inspection Shippons have generally been found well kept and lime-washed and the milk stores exceptionally clean, the water supply being pure and wholesome, the cattle being kept of a sound healthy class. Twenty milk samples were taken.

INFECTIOUS CASES.

The number of Infectious cases reported during the year amounted to ten, being three less than last year.

Scarlet Fever	7
Diphtheria	2
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	1
	10

Out of the above number of cases 10 were removed to Hospital and ten houses disinfected.

Disinfectants have been supplied to the several schools and infected houses.

FOOD.

At the various food shops, 29 tins containing 51 lbs. of food, have been condemned as unfit for human consumption; also 150 lbs. of Oranges.

NUISANCES.

When nuisances have arisen, these have been readily attended to and abated by the owners or tenants, few written notices having had to be served.

HOUSE REFUSE AND SALVAGE.

The cleaning of Ashbins, Ashpits, and common Privies (where in use) has been well attended to, no complaints having been received.

In place of this being carried out by horse and cart, the Council have purchased a motor wagon for this purpose, which has resulted in a more regular and a shorter service, each house being visited once a fortnight for refuse and salvage.

The ashes collected are disposed of by tipping in land hollows on the outskirts of the village, being afterwards coated over with soil. The procuring of these tips at suitable distances from the village is becoming very difficult. The finding of a large tip nearer the village would be much more economical, the present tips should however be suitable for another two years.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE WORK.

The sewers and manholes in the village have been kept in good working order being periodically flushed and cleansed. The surface road gullies have had regular attention and the village streets have been kept in a clean condition.

At the Sewerage Works temporary improvements have been carried out as the improvement scheme for more filters and humus treatment cannot be carried out in war-time.

JAMES MARSHALL,

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

